

## **WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN**

Dear 7th District Residents,

As your representative in Washington, I am committed to avoiding a government shutdown. President Obama has said that a shutdown would affect millions of Americans, threaten vital services they have already paid for, and jeopardize our nation's economic recovery.

Yesterday, Democrats offered three opportunities to vote to keep the government open. Republicans voted no each time. Today, Speaker Boehner and the Republican leadership refuse to allow us to pass a very short term bill to keep government services operating while the few remaining issues are resolved.

I remain hopeful that a shutdown can still be prevented and I will do everything I can to avoid that outcome. However, I have received numerous calls from local residents who are concerned about how a shutdown might impact the government services that they rely on, so I want to provide you with the information I have available at this time.

These critical services would NOT be affected:

- Social Security: Social Security checks for seniors, people with disabilities and survivors would still go out. But new Social Security applications will likely not be processed during any shutdown, as during previous shutdowns.
- Medicare: Seniors who are already enrolled in Medicare should continue to receive services as normal. New and pending claims may be delayed.
- Military: Troops would continue to serve, though their pay could be put on hold. They will receive retroactive pay once a spending bill is enacted.
- Homeland Security: Critical homeland security functions such as border security, airport security, federal law enforcement and disaster preparedness would continue.
- Postal Service: The Postal Service, which is self-funded, would continue to operate.
- Airports: The FAA would keep the air traffic control system open and safe.

However, some services would likely be affected:

- **Unemployment Benefits:** If a government shutdown continues for an extended period of time, the federal funds that help the State of Indiana pay the costs of its unemployment program could run out. This would require the State to step in and advance the money to keep the program running. If states do not intervene, benefits would be reduced or stopped and the unemployed would no longer receive assistance.
- **Veteran's services:** In the event of a shutdown, health care services provided by VA hospitals and clinics would continue, as would disability payments for claims that have already been processed. As was the case in FY 1996, new and pending claims would likely be delayed.
- **Passports and Visas:** Over 200,000 passport applications and 30,000 visas went unprocessed during the fiscal year 1996 shutdown. In the event of a shutdown, these applications would once again go unprocessed.
- **Internal Revenue Service:** This shutdown will be unique because of its proximity to tax filing day. Tax forms will still need to be postmarked by Monday, April 18. Forms filed electronically would be processed as usual although paper forms may result in a delay in receiving a refund.
- **Housing:** New FHA home loan guarantees may cease. However, public housing and homelessness programs would continue in the event of a shutdown.
- **Small Business Administration:** SBA approval of applications for business loan guarantees and direct loans to small businesses would likely cease, impacting the engines of our economy and potentially slowing the economic recovery.
- **National parks, monuments and museums:** As was the case in FY 1996, over 360 national parks, monuments and museums would close and access to them would be cut off to visitors. These would not reopen at any point until a spending bill is passed.

Rest assured that I will continue working with my colleagues throughout a shutdown to provide funding to each of these critical programs. During this time, my offices in both Indianapolis and Washington, D.C. will remain open so that my staff can continue providing services to the constituents across the 7th Congressional District.

If you have any questions about the government shutdown or its effect on you and your family, please feel free to contact my Indianapolis office at (317) 283-6516 or my Washington office at (202) 225-4011.